

Kyodan

News Letter

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST IN JAPAN
JAPAN CHRISTIAN CENTER
551 Totsukamachi 1-chome
Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 160, Japan

Cable Address: Japankyodan Tokyo

Telephone: 202-0541

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THE FLOE AND THE FLOW IN THE KYODAN IN THE WINTER OF 1974

Although the Executive Committee remains "frozen" following failure of the 17th General Assembly to elect new members, activity is flowing in two other channels.

On January 19, Moderator Isuke Toda met with the chairmen of the Standing Committees, who agreed to extend the terms of their present committee members inasmuch as new committees were not elected by the Assembly.

And on February 12-13, Toda consulted with district moderators and representatives, who have been playing an increasingly prominent consultative role. What kind of examination should be given those desiring to become Kyodan pastors? The question was discussed and emphasis put on the importance of considering it as part of the much larger subject of the nurture and training of ministers, the nature of mission, the nature and direction of the Kyodan.

District moderators were divided on the question of whether the officers should proceed with the recommendation of persons qualified for ordination and ordinarily approved by the General Assembly, in view of the tensions that still exist over the subject of ministerial qualifications.

The District Moderators' Consultation decided to call a meeting of the Preparation Committee for the 18th General Assembly on March 12-13, the committee to be composed of persons named by the districts plus five laymen.

Toda told both meetings that the advice provided by the Consultation of Standing Committee Chairmen and the District Moderators' Consultation will be given equal weight in accord with Article 39: 1-5 of the Bylaws, although in most instances the responsibility for decisions will rest with the officers.

MEMO from Bangkok Correspondent Murakami, *Asahi Shimbun* (eve.) Jan. 17, 1974

"What happened to cause the anti-Japan movement?" "How can we put a stop to it?" Faced by the storm of anti-Japan protests swirling in South East Asia, Japanese governmental and financial worlds are hurrying to find out what happened and concoct a remedy, as though once you know the cause all you have to do is prescribe the appropriate treatment.

I see serious mistakes in this approach. One is what is assumed in the words "We didn't anticipate anything like this would happen" or "In spite of all the help we've given...." Feelings of regret seem dormant.

The second mistake is to put all our strength into finding a remedy for the anti-Japan attitudes. When anti-Japan feelings are springing out of holes all over the bucket, no matter how you work to plug the holes from outside, it won't work. There's nothing to do but get a new bucket.

....
It's necessary to stop asking "What happened?" and begin with a basic approach to foreign policy and trade in South East Asia that recognizes what happened happened as a result of what Japan has done.

反日感情

日米関係の悪化は、昨年の「リレー」以来、日本とアメリカとの関係に深刻な影響を与えている。その原因は、日本側の過剰な経済力と、アメリカ側の経済的弱体化にある。日本は、その経済力を利用して、アメリカの市場を占領しようとしている。これは、アメリカの利益に反する。アメリカは、日本に対して、経済的制裁を課している。これは、日本に対して、経済的圧力を加えている。日本は、これに対して、経済的抵抗を示している。これは、アメリカに対して、経済的対抗を示している。この結果、日米関係は、ますます悪化している。これは、日米関係の悪化の悪循環である。

NAKADAIRA KENKICHI
Lawyer

Why would a man in mid-career give up a judgeship to begin anew as a lawyer, particularly in Japan, where status and security are so highly prized? This was my question as I set out for the law office of Kenkichi Nakadaira. I found my answer two floors underground in the busy Ginza area of Tokyo. h.p.

There, in quiet, modest, but comfortable offices, Kenkichi Nakadaira explained why he had chosen to resign from the Tokyo High Court two years ago and hang out his shingle as a lawyer.

"For a long time I had felt I wanted to work on behalf of my fellowman. As a judge I could not choose what cases I took; as a lawyer, I could.

"There were two cases I was particularly interested in: the case of a pastor defending his right to protect the confidences of persons he counsels, and the case of a Japan-born Korean whose employment contract was broken because he was Korean.

"Also, I am a layman but I want to proclaim the joy of the Gospel in my daily life more than was possible as a judge. I was often invited to speak in churches but the court frowned on this, saying 'A judge shouldn't run around speaking....'

"Yet there are many things in Japanese life that need to be questioned, many instances of discrimination. I wanted to be able to make my witness with regard to them.

"There is one more reason." And Nakadaira's usually relaxed expression tightened a little. "In 1966 Masahisa Suzuki wrote the Confession of War Responsibility, which expresses regret for the failure of Christians to oppose the military aggression of Japan toward other Asian countries. But Suzuki felt strongly that it was not enough to express this in words; if we really mean it, we must do something about it with our lives."

(Suzuki was pastor of Nishikatamachi Church, of which Nakadaira is a member. He died of cancer two years after writing the Confession, while Moderator of the Kyodan.)

"The Koreans in Japan [many of whom were brought to Japan during Japan's military rule in Asia] are the group most discriminated against in Japan. I wanted to work for them. I don't expect to do anything great; I just want to do what I can as one Christian."

What kind of cases has Nakadaira taken --now that he can choose?

More than half of the cases have involved Koreans. Also, about half have been on an expense-only basis. Of the other half, related to property, personal injury, divorce, etc., half are persons of low income, who can not pay the ordinary fees, the other half, persons who can.

Nakadaira ran down a partial list of recent or pending cases, beginning with the cases of the pastor and the Korean worker that originally spurred him to enter private law practice.

--enshrinement of a peace-time soldier at a Shinto shrine to the war dead, contrary to the wishes of his wife, who is a Christian--an infringement of freedom of faith and separation of state and religion

--use of information about a boy's junior high school activities to disbar him from high school in spite of his academic qualifications--a violation of freedom of thought

--the closing of a theological seminary as a breach of contract with enrolled students (also interpreted as an attempt to purge the faculty in violation of academic freedom)

--eviction of a Korean pig farmer by his landlord

--the case of a woman forced out of the house by her husband

--compensation from the government for defective immunization procedures that resulted in mental and physical disabilities for 131 persons

From the position of the Confession of War Responsibility, how does Nakadaira view the Japanese presence in Asia at the present time?

"I think this is one of the most important issues for Japan as a nation and for us as Japanese citizens."

"Japan has emerged as an economic big power. I wish it were not so. For history provides no example of a big economic power that has not become a big military power."

"If Japan would use her economic strength in the right way, it could be of real help to other Asian countries. But, unfortunately, Japan tends to do what is profitable for Japan, ignoring the desires and rights of other countries."

"Japan doesn't yet understand democracy deeply--freedom of conscience, human rights, the protection of the rights of minorities."

"We must listen to and learn from the voices of conscience, letting them lead us...."

Voices of conscience?

"This is where the Koreans in Japan are so important." And Nakadaira again leaned forward, the lawyer making his point. "We Japanese tend to feel that our economic achievements make us superior to other people. We must be faced with the fact that the Koreans and Japanese living together in Japan are both part of one and the same mankind."

"We must learn from them to respect the rights of others and conduct our trade and aid in Asia respecting the rights and wishes of those countries."

How does Nakadaira, who is a serious student of the Bible and does lay preaching, understand the nature of evil in society today?

"The world is facing many problems--oil crisis, inflation, destruction of the environment. While there are many causes behind these, I think the central one is sin in the hearts of men. The drive to get ahead by pushing others down. The desire to make a lot of money (a special temptation for lawyers, as I know from personal experience). Or, if not to make a lot of money, to get along with as little effort as possible. Some of our sins we are aware of; some we are not."

"My biggest struggle is with myself. But to realize the presence of sin in one's own heart, confess it, know the promise of forgiveness in the Gospel, and, by the grace of God, receive the power to overcome it--this is the joy that I want to witness to in my daily life."

A friend recalled another occasion on which Nakadaira described how he wants to live each day. Relaxing with friends at a party, watching the awa-odori dancers with their free, natural movements and rhythm, Nakadaira said, "That's what I'd like my daily life to be--a dance in praise of the Lord."

Taeko Nakadaira resigned as an English teacher at Toyo Eiwa High School to assist her husband when he resigned to practice law. The Nakadairas have three children: a son in college, a son in high school, and a daughter in junior high school.

Beyond the unostentatious meeting room is another office, its walls lined with shelves of law tomes. But there also hangs a simple black and white print--the figure of a man and the words of Samuel: "Speak, Lord; thy servant hears thee."

(In the next issue of KNL, Nakadaira will discuss why Christians in Japan have recently become involved in a number of legal cases.)

what has been -- I N T H E K Y O D A N -- what is to be

I. Coming Events

Conference for Kyodan-related Missionaries to be held March 26-28
Planning Com. announces intention to organize the Kyodan evangelical association (Fukuin-shugi Domei) in March
New Preparation Committee for 18th General Assembly to meet March 12-13
American Church Women United holds joint seminar with Japanese Church women on Peace as part of Japan tour Feb. 21-28

II. Recent Events

Districts

Hokkai district holds New Year retreat Jan. 14-15 on theme of "Encounter" with 313 laymen and pastors from 43 churches (Shimpo 2/9)
Nishi Chugoku holds Seminar on Social Problems Jan. 14 on theme of "questioning Japanese racial characteristics" (Shimpo 2/9)

Ecumenical

4th NCC Standing Executive Com. Jan. 10 decides to recommend to special General Assembly in April that AVACO division become independent and a NCC-member organization (Shimpo 2/2)

Evangelism

"Tatoï so de nakutemo" (Even if God doesn't intervene) by Yi Sook An (Kyodan News Letter Nov. 1972) will be made into a movie (Shimbun 2/2)

Kyodan

Chairmen of Standing Committees meet Jan. 16; inasmuch as 17th General Assembly did not elect new committees, former members will continue to serve (Shimpo 2/2, News Letter 2/74)

Ministry

2nd Joint Pastoral Studies Seminar studies theme of "Pastors in the Modern Society" at Oiso Academy House Jan. 31-Feb. 6

Social

Christians hold meetings throughout Japan on Feb. 11 (National Foundation Day) observing it as Protecting Religious Freedom Day" (Shimpo 2/9, Shimbun 2/16)
NCC Yasukuni Problem Special Com. appeals for national network of parades in view of resumption of Diet Jan. 21 (Shimpo 1/26)
NCC General Secretary writes U.S. President Nixon asking him not to visit Yasukuni Shrine when he comes to Japan (Shimpo 2/2)
Kyodan Com. on Social Concerns issues "Message for Protecting Religious Freedom Day" Feb. 11 (Shimpo 2/9)
40 leaders of various religious groups, members of Yasukuni Problem Liaison Conf., hold press conference on their appeal to Prime Minister to drop Yasukuni bill (Shimpo 2/9)
Japanese Christians' Urgent Conference on Korean Problems is held Jan. 15 at Shinanomachi Church, decides to organize continuation committee, issues statement of support for those opposing Korean Pres. Park's extraordinary steps (Shimpo 1/26, 2/2, Shimbun 1/26, 2/2)

Women

National Federation of Kyodan Women's Society holds Central Com. meeting Jan. 21-23 (Shimpo 2/9)